

FIFTEEN SOVIET REPUBLICS
TODAY AND TOMORROW

ESTONIA

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Wonderful Present—Marvellous Future



Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic

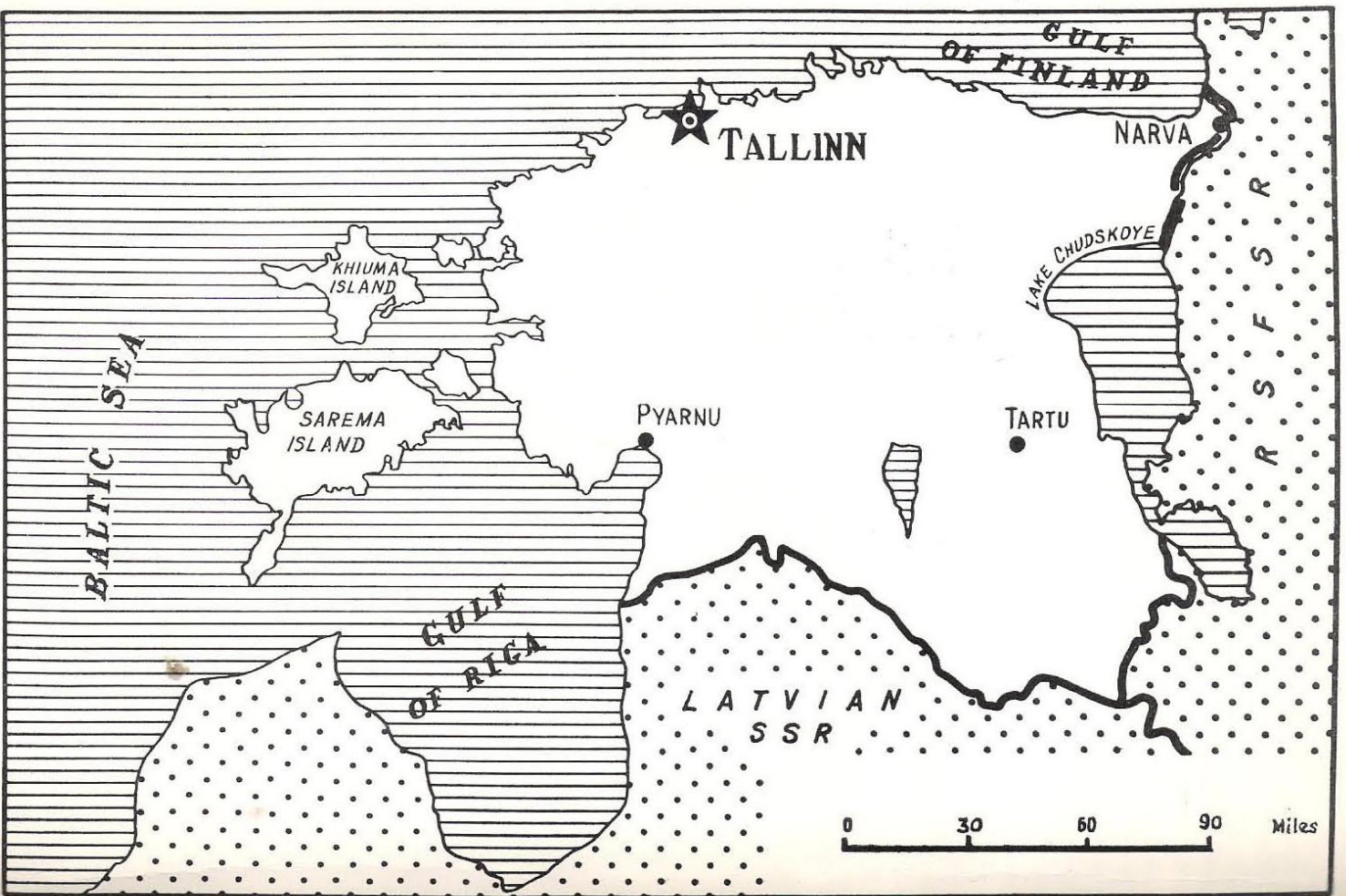
by

Alexei Murisep

Chairman of the Estonian S.S.R.
Council of Ministers

Soviet
Booklet
No. 60/0

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Wonderful Present—Marvellous Future

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A. A. MURISEP

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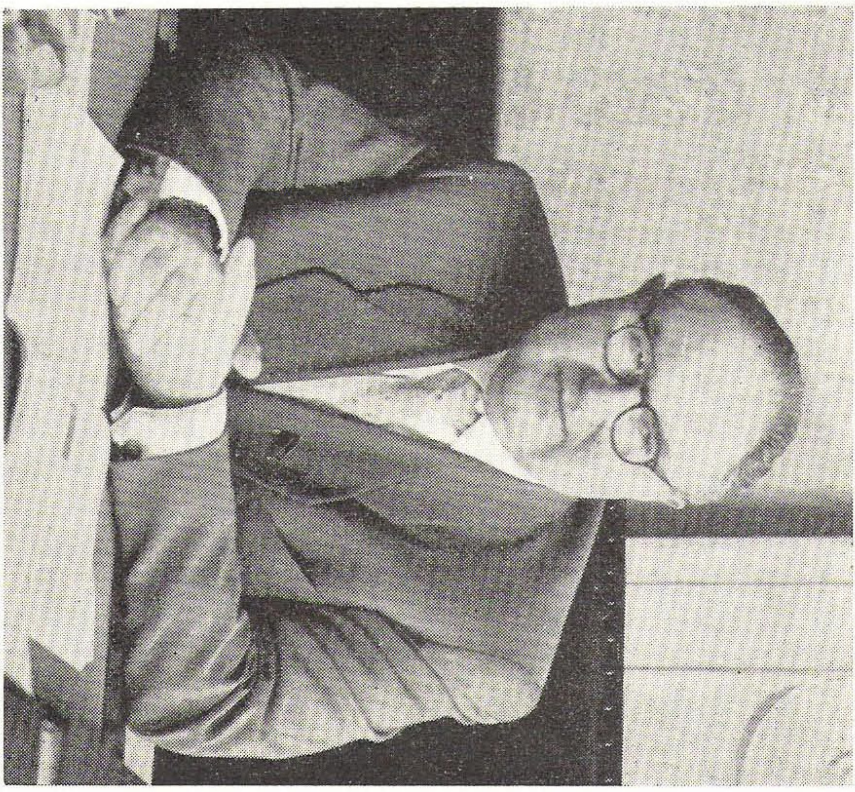
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Soviet Booklet
No. 60/O

London
December, 1959

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ALEXEI A. MURISEV

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A Note on the Author

ALEXEI A. MURISEP was born in 1902 on Saaremaa Island. His father was a merchant seaman.

While Estonia was under capitalist rule he worked and studied in the Soviet Union. After graduating from an institute of railway engineers, he worked on the Ordzhonikidze, Krasnoyarsk and Estonian railway lines.

A member of the Communist Party since 1926, he held various Party and trade union positions, as well as doing responsible work in government departments.

Later he held important posts in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Estonia. From 1949-51 he was Vice-Chairman and, since 1951, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Estonian S.S.R.

A. Murisep is a member of the Supreme Soviets of both the Estonian S.S.R. and the U.S.S.R.

Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic

Land and People

FIRST, allow me to give some general information about my Republic, her land and her people.

Soviet Estonia is a sovereign socialist state, one of the fifteen Soviet Republics that make up the voluntary Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It is situated in the north-west of the Soviet Union and is washed by the Baltic Sea.

It covers an area of some 18,000 square miles. Part of the territory (a tenth) is made up of some 800 islands.

Apart from the Estonians, who comprise the bulk of the population of 1,200,000, there are also Russians, Letts, and other nationalities.

The ancient city of Tallinn, the capital of the Republic, which has a population of 280,000, is situated on the shores of the Gulf of Finland. Other large centres are the university town of Tartu (formerly Derpt) and Narva. The biggest of the new Estonian towns to have sprung up in Soviet times is Kokkila-Yarve, centre of the shale industry.

The history of Estonia is one of a dramatic national struggle for liberation. Since the thirteenth century the Estonians groaned under the heel of alien feudal rulers who laid waste to this then unhappy land. From the eighteenth century onwards, when Estonia became part of the Russian empire, the destiny of her people became closely linked with the struggle of the people of Russia against tsarist despotism and for liberty.

The October Revolution of 1917 resulted in the social and national emancipation of all the peoples of Russia.

Soviet power gave Estonia, for the first time in her history, full equality and independence. An Estonian Soviet Republic, the first really independent Estonian State, was formed.

It was short-lived, however. After only four months' existence German troops occupied the country, and a bourgeois dictatorship was set up.

In the twenty years of capitalist rule, the Estonian workers and peasants fought heroically, under the leadership of the Communist Party, for economic and social emancipation.

This culminated in victory in the summer of 1940. Estonia was proclaimed a Soviet Socialist Republic and joined the Soviet Union.

A new chapter, that of socialism, began in the life of the Estonian people.

Capitalist Legacy

When Estonia was part of the Russian empire, it was counted an industrially well-developed region. The number of factory workers here, to every 1,000 of the population, was double the countrywide average.

Estonia, however, fell into careless hands when her capitalists took over. The Estonian capitalists ignored Estonia's national interests and curtailed every branch of industry that did not yield a quick profit.

Gradually, big industrial enterprises, employing tens of thousands of people, were snuffed out of existence.

Thus at one of Europe's biggest textile mills, the Narva Krenholm Manufactures, 9,000 of its 11,000 employees were laid off, and output fell to a seventh of what it had originally been.

The same sad fate overtook the Volta electric-motor plant where the staff was cut from 2,000 to 230.

Old workers still shudder when they recollect those years of mass unemployment.

Alexander Laansalu, quite a celebrity in the Republic today, who was recently returned as a deputy to the Estonian Supreme Soviet, is a blacksmith and works at the factory of mercury-arc rectifiers.

In the old days, however, this first-rate craftsman was unemployed for years on end. At a meeting of constituents, he told the young people present the story of his former miserable life:

"After service in the army I went to Tallinn to look for work. I'd learned the trade of a blacksmith when a young lad. I applied at one factory for a job and was told that they had dismissed their own blacksmiths just the day before. I then went to another factory and again found that workers were being laid off.

"To cut the story short, I couldn't find a job anywhere. And let me add that there were crowds of unemployed like me in Tallinn then. I was glad even if I could find work as an unskilled labourer.

"All I had for many years was an occasional job now and then. I had grown quite desperate when in 1938 I finally found a job at the railway workshops. Even then every day I was haunted by the thought that they might suddenly begin to lay off people and again I would be out of work."

The shale industry did, it is true, begin to develop a bit, but chiefly on account of foreign investment. This, however, could not compensate for the damage done to Estonia's economy by the abolition of her large-scale industry.

Gradually capitalist Estonia lost her one-time industrial significance.

Dairy and meat farming became the main branch of her economy.

But only the rich peasants who had enough in the way of farming implements, grazing grounds and resources could prosper.

The bulk of the peasants were land hungry and could not make ends meet by farming. Every year at least 70,000 of them hired themselves out to the richer landowners as farm hands.

To obtain good crops one needs fertiliser. But it was very costly. In 1938 a metric ton of superphosphates cost as much as 55 lb. of butter and a ton of potassium salts as much as 127 lb. of butter.

Naturally, the smaller holders were unable to buy it.

Agricultural prices continually fluctuated according to the situation on the world market. Often the peasant could not earn enough even to meet his expenses on his holding. Thousands of peasants were ruined and their houses and farms auctioned away.

Nor did white-collar workers feel any confidence in the future. Thousands of intellectuals were entirely without employment.

Such was the legacy the capitalists left the Estonian people.

The restoration of Soviet power in Estonia in 1940 gave everyone the

hope and certainty that their lives would change fundamentally, that the national economy would develop and anxiety for the future vanish.

These hopes quickly began to be realised.

In the very first years of Soviet power the number of workers employed in industry went up by 50 per cent. The peasants received land. Plans were drafted rapidly to advance Estonia's economy.

However, these plans were not carried out. In 1941 the Nazis overran Estonia. Their three-year occupation did her economy tremendous damage. Whole towns like Narva were razed to the ground. Only a heap of rubble remained of the big Krenholm textile mills, the Dvigatel plant and many other enterprises.

In Estonia the Nazis killed 125,000 peaceful citizens and prisoners of war and drove away many inhabitants to Germany. During fascist occupation thousands fled to Sweden and other countries.

It has been reckoned that the total war damage done to Estonia's economy amounted to 16,000 million roubles.

Rebirth

It seemed that many decades would be needed to rehabilitate Estonia's economy. Perhaps this would have really been the case had Estonia not been a member of the fraternal family of Soviet Republics, and had it not been for the leadership of the Communist Party.

A few words about Estonia's status.

Estonia is an independent state, with her own constitution, her own legislative body—the Supreme Soviet—and her own government, the Council of Ministers.

Industry is administered by the Economic Council of Estonia and partially by the local Soviets.

The Estonian people are complete masters of their Republic and manage their internal affairs as they see fit. They do not bow to anyone else's will.

Estonia also takes an active part in deciding matters that concern the entire 200-million-strong Soviet Union. Any law that the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. (in which there are also Estonian deputies) adopts is obligatory for all the Soviet Republics.

While fully mistress of her own wealth and economic resources, Estonia can at the same time widely draw on the riches and economic achievements of the other Soviet Republics.

Estonia does not have any coal, oil, pig-iron or steel of her own; nor does she have any tractor or motor car works. This, however, is no drawback; she can get fuel, metal, tractors, motor vehicles and many other commodities from the other republics.

In turn Estonia supplies them with her own products—electric motors, excavators, radio sets, various instruments, butter and meat.

Fraternal assistance helped Estonia to recover rapidly from the damages of German occupation.

She rose phoenix-like from the ashes. Within the space of fifteen years Estonia has become an industrially well-developed country. Some 4,000 million roubles were invested in Estonian industry after the war.

New huge factories, the like of which Estonia had never seen before, were built. A shale-chemical works, supplying both Tallinn and Leningrad

with household gas, was erected in Kokhtla-Yarve. Two huge power stations, operating on shale dust, and five big shale mines have been constructed.

Many big enterprises like the Krenholm and Baltic textile mills, which had been destroyed in the war, were completely rebuilt.

A big hydro-electric station has been erected on the Narva River. Among the dozens of other enterprises put up there is one that makes excavators. Both new and old factories and mills have been equipped with highly efficient equipment.

In 1958 Estonian industry's gross output was 9.3 times more than in 1940. It is curious to note that in 1958 per capita output here was much more than the U.S.S.R. average. This not only shows that Estonian industry has rapidly advanced, but it certainly gives the lie to those who alleged that Estonia had "gone to the dogs" after becoming a Soviet Republic. Soviet Estonia today is a flourishing land. The new Seven-Year Plan holds out still wider prospects.

Main Seven-Year Targets

The Communist Party has always paid attention to developing the productive forces of the Union Republics. Under the Seven-Year Plan each republic will primarily develop those branches of the economy for which it has the best and most suitable natural and economic conditions. At the same time the Plan provides for a proper combination between the interests of each of the republics and of the Soviet Union as a whole.

What does this mean?

First, that all the peoples of the U.S.S.R., including the Estonians, have one common aim—to build a communist society. The Seven-Year Plan ushers in a new chapter in the history of all the Soviet peoples, a chapter of the comprehensive building of communism.

Secondly, that in the Soviet Union all nations are equal, that all are equally concerned in the further economic prosperity of all the other republics, and that there are no nations or peoples in the position of step-children, as our enemies would like to make out.

Thirdly, that the economic links between the different Soviet Republics will grow still stronger and that there will be an increased socialist division of labour. This co-operation precludes the development and even the slightest advantage of any one nation at the expense of another.

Everyone helped to draw up and discuss the Seven-Year Plan. In Estonia all the workers at every enterprise, collective farm and scientific institution discussed most thoroughly and from every angle everything that could be done to advance the republic's economy faster.

Tens of thousands of suggestions were made. The Central Committee of the Communist Party, newspapers and magazine officers were literally deluged with letters containing remarks and advice.

The Council of Ministers and State Planning Committee of the Republic, the Economic Council and the Ministries gave the people's suggestions every consideration. Everything of value was taken into account in the final drafting of the Plan.

What are the main seven-year targets for economic advancement in Estonia? Which branches of the economy are slated for priority development?

More than 8,000 million roubles, 80 per cent more than in 1952-58, will be invested in republican and local economy.

A further 2,000 million roubles is to be earmarked for building the Baltic electric station and to develop the railway network, the commercial fleet and other branches of republican economy under all-Union authority, while some 4,000 million roubles will be invested by the co-operatives, collective farms and other organisations.

Gross industrial output in the Republic is slated for an increase of approximately 80 per cent. Output in engineering will go up 130 per cent, of shale 80 per cent, of electricity 450 per cent, and of agricultural produce almost double. The fishing catch is to go up 120 per cent.

What do these targets mean for Estonia's economy? What improvements will there be in the life of the people when the Seven-Year Plan is carried out? What will Estonia be like tomorrow?

Let me begin by telling you of the industry which is the foundation for raising the people's welfare.

Shale—Estonia's Key Mineral

Combustible shale is Estonia's basic mineral wealth. Its exploitation was started some forty years ago.

However, the shale industry really began to develop in Estonia only after the war, in Soviet times. Between 1944 and 1958, five mines, one having an annual capacity of 1 million tons, were sunk, and a gas-shale factory was also built. Shale output is six times as much as in 1940, and reached 9 million tons in 1958.

One can hardly overestimate the significance shale has for Estonia.

Most of the electricity output in the republic is generated by power stations working on shale. It is also used for heating enterprises, offices and houses.

Tens of thousands of flats in Tallinn, Leningrad and Kokhtla-Yarve are supplied with gas made from shale, while its oil is used as fuel in steam engines and also as a basic material for making many valuable products.

In the seven-year period the output of shale is to increase by 7 million tons to reach 16 million tons—ten times as much as was mined in capitalist Estonia in 1939.

This increase is to be achieved on a completely new technical basis. Currently shale is mined underground, but in the near future it will be extensively quarried.

The Baltic power station going up near Narva will consume a tremendous amount of shale and for this purpose it is planned to open up new shale quarries with a total annual capacity of 10 million tons.

At the same time underground shale mining will also be increased in existing mines, as well as in newly opened ones.

At the big shale quarries we shall see excavators with buckets of over 700 cubic feet in size. They will load the shale not on to 3-ton tip-up lorries as today but on to 40-ton ones!

Shale serves not only as a fuel; it is also a very valuable basic material for the chemical industry. We are already making oil, petrol, combustible mazout and other things from it.

Later on we shall obtain from it such important economic products as

plastics, man-made fibre, synthetic detergents, nitrogen fertiliser, glue, varnishes, synthetic tanning agents, and many other things.

More shale is to be processed into household gas for the needs of Estonia's urban population. The second gas pipeline that will be laid to Tallinn by 1962 will not only give the population more gas but also enable several industrial establishments to be switched to gas and thus completely rid the skies of smoke.

The ash from burned shale is also being used. Estonian scientists have learnt how to manufacture excellent building materials from it. There are plans to complete by 1959 the construction at Akhima of the first section of a factory making wall panels from shale ash. Shale ash will also be widely used as a fertiliser.

Man has still to discover all the secrets of shale. Many Estonian scientists are investigating its properties and the methods used to mine and process it. A special Institute of Shale has been founded in Estonia.

Republic of Electricity

We have mentioned before that the bulk of Estonia's electricity output is produced by power stations working on shale. The years 1949 and 1954 saw the starting-up of two power stations operating on shale dust.

We have also mentioned that the construction of the Baltic power station near Narva is in full swing. When this station is finished it will provide plenty of electricity for all Estonia's industry and meet also all the requirements of her agriculture and her people.

On top of that there will be plenty of electricity in reserve. It will be transmitted by high-tension lines to Leningrad and Riga; every collective farm in the republic will be supplied with electricity; and it will be fed by an underwater cable to the islands of Saaremaa and Hiiumaa (Dagoe). Thus the whole of Estonia will be supplied with electricity.

Electricity was unknown on the isle of Kikimu before. But today the isle is brightly illuminated. The electric power station that started working there this year has provided lighting for all the houses of the collective farmers and for the House of Culture.

All the livestock sections are now supplied with electricity and this has made milking much easier. Only a short while ago fish was unloaded and salted by hand. Now electric motors do the job, with the fish carried by a conveyor to cold storage and to the salting barrels. Electric windlasses load the fish into refrigerator ships.

Old Estonia was on "hunger rations" as far as electricity went. The power industry developed at a snail's pace. In the last seven years of capitalist rule the electricity output increased by only 173 million kwh. In the same amount of time in socialist Estonia—between 1951 and 1958—the electricity output went up by 640 million kwh.

In the seven years ending 1965 it will increase still more, by another 5,000-odd million kwh.

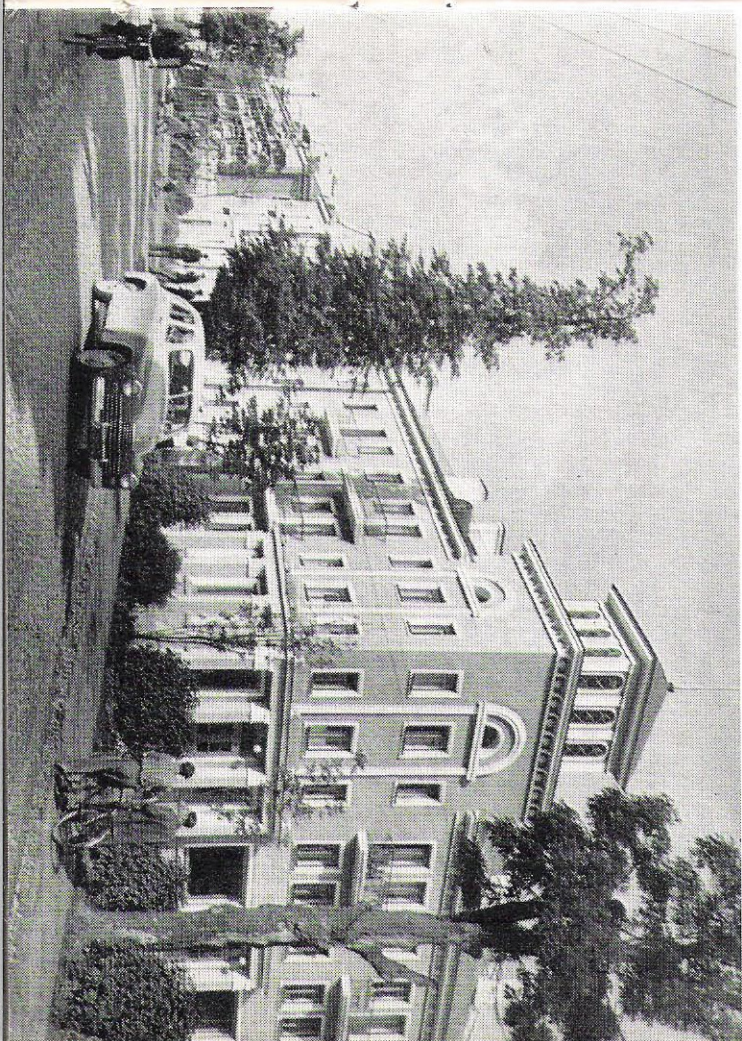
In 1965 Estonia will generate 6,400 million kwh. of electricity, five-and-a-half times more than in 1958 and thirty-two-and-a-half times more than in the old Estonia.

In that year our little republic alone will produce 230 per cent more electricity than the whole of tsarist Russia did in 1913.

Ilma Nukka is one of the leading weavers in the Krenholm Textile Mills in Narva.

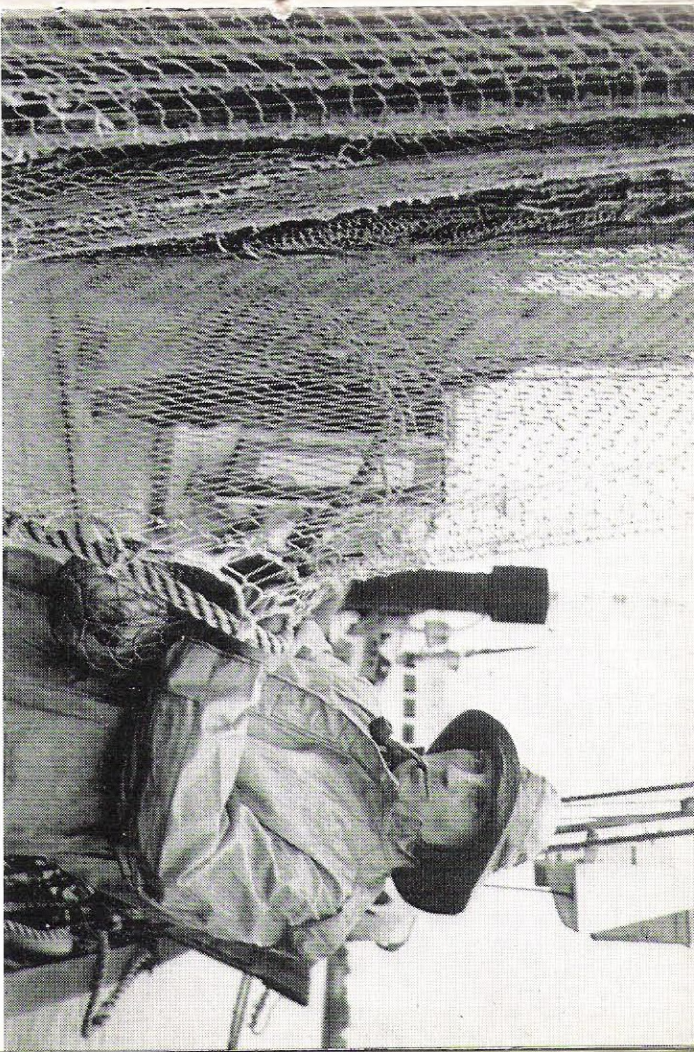


New apartment houses for workers of the Krenholm Textile Mills in Narva.



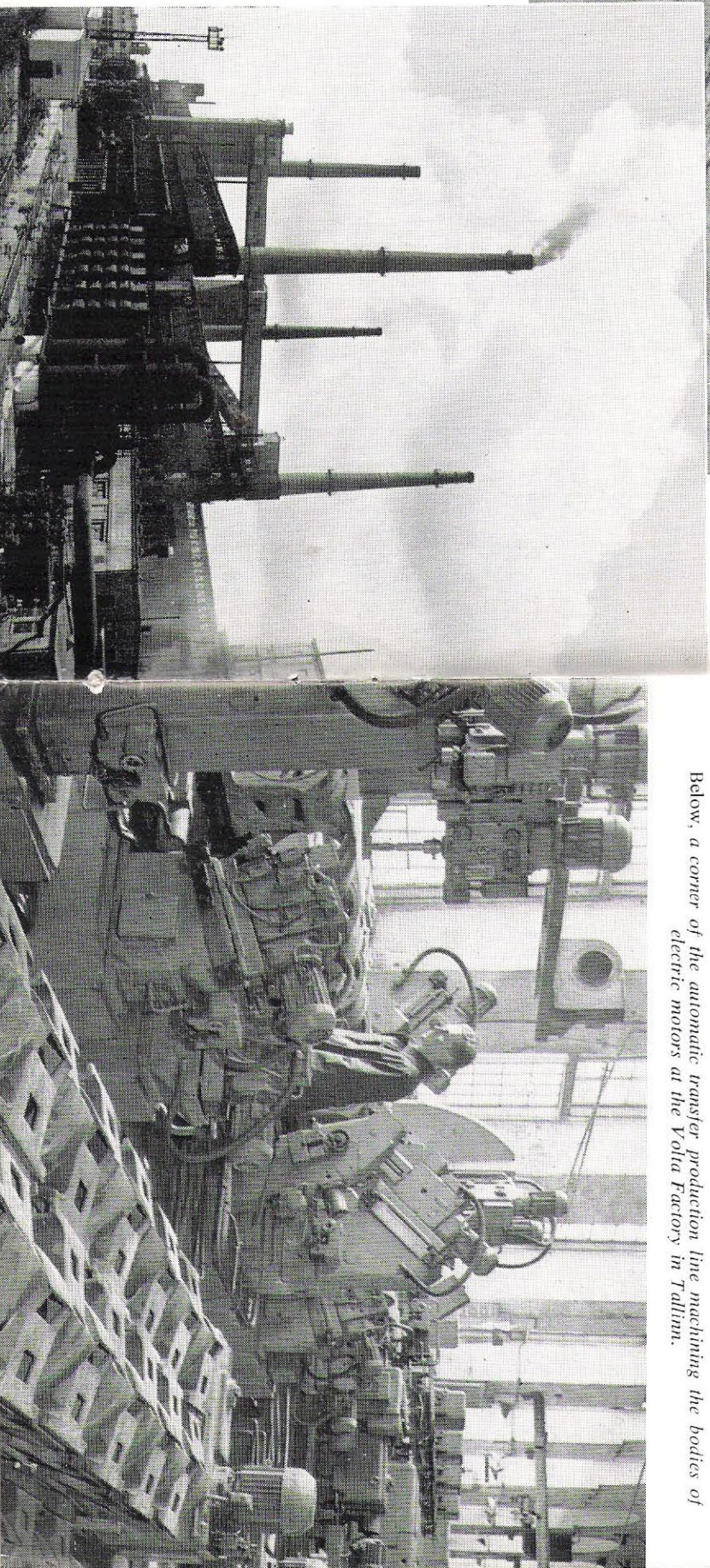


Eric Kuitus (left) and Ivan Faateyev in Pit No. 2 of the Estonian State Trust. Eric is a loading machine operator, whilst Ivan is a mine foreman.

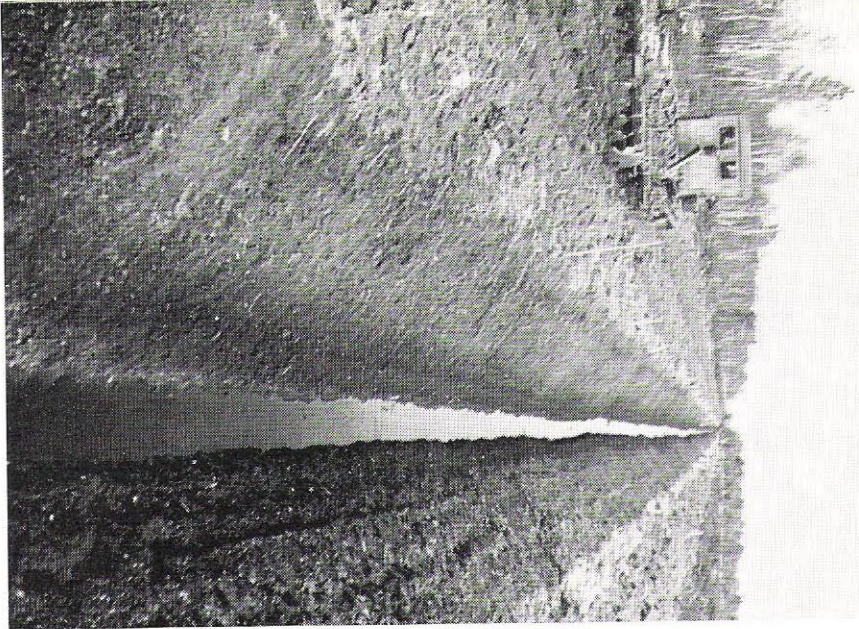


Edward Tiinus, above, is an expert on one of Estonia's leading industries—mechanised fishing. Here he is checking the trawl-net.

Below, a corner of the automatic transfer production line machining the bodies of electric motors at the Volta Factory in Tallinn.

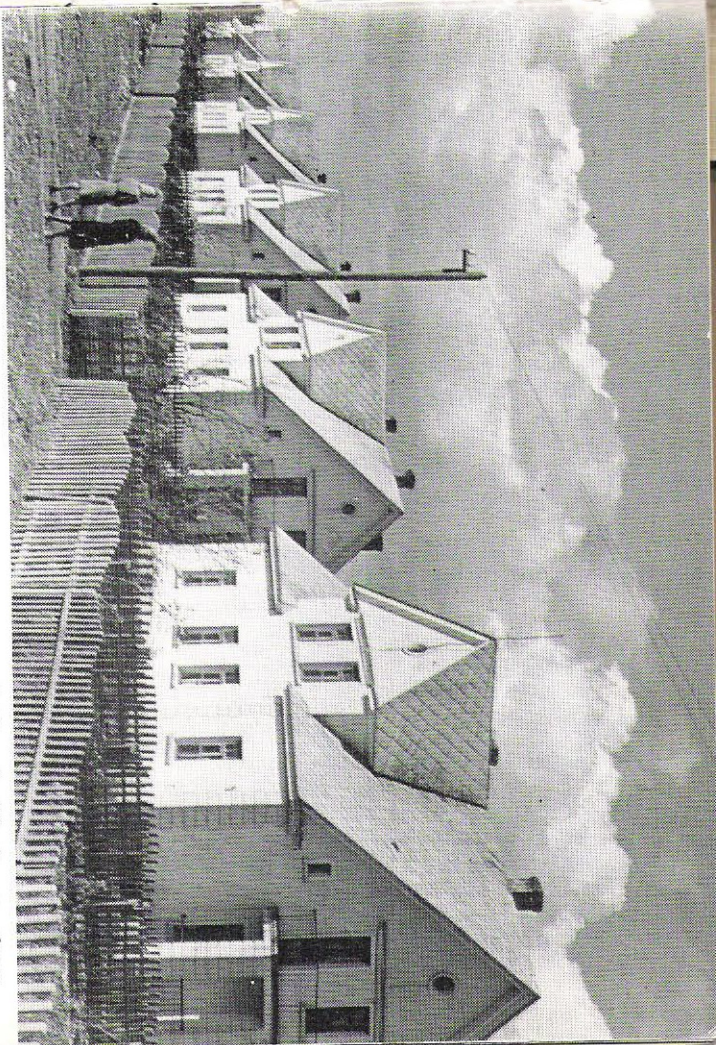
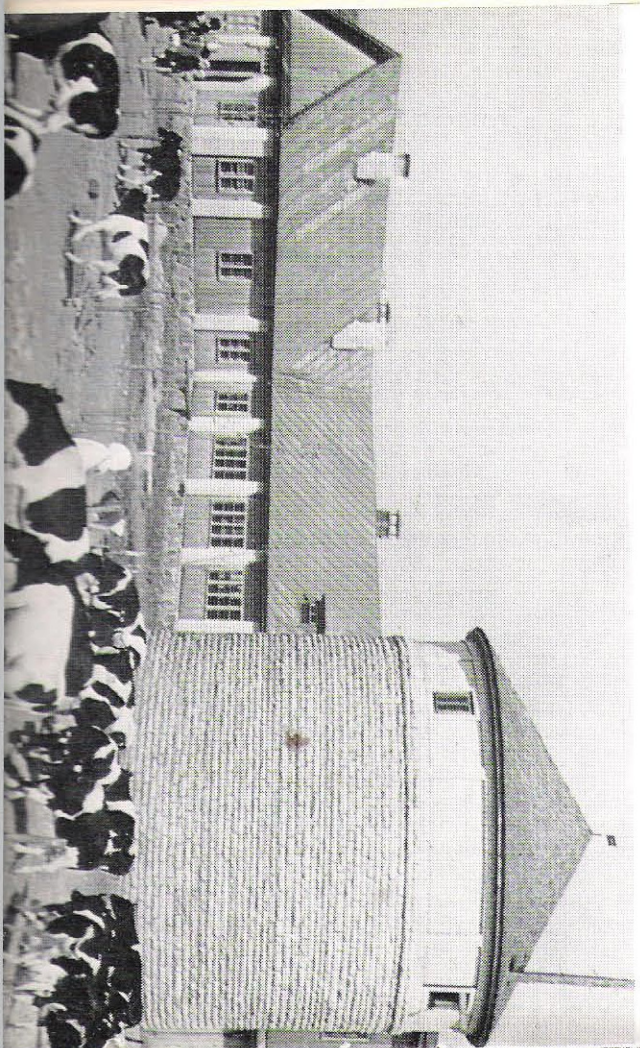


The shade-processing mill at Kohila-Yarve.



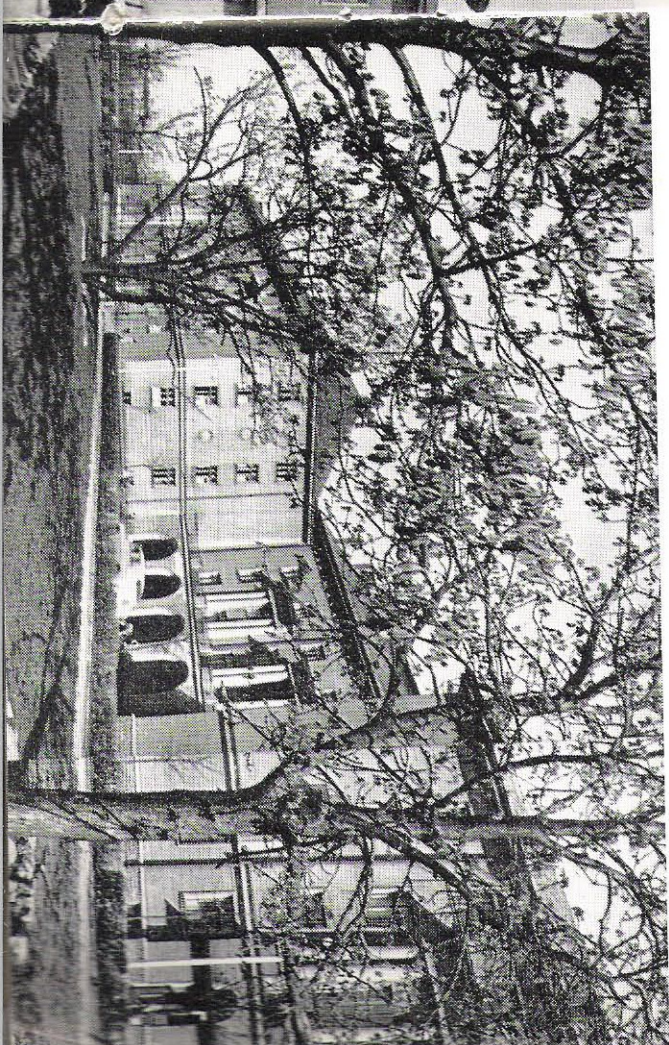
Extensive land reclamation is going on in the Estonian Republic. Here we see a deep drainage channel in previously-boggy land, which is now fit to plough.

Below: the dairy section of the Kõstivere State Farm in Harju District.



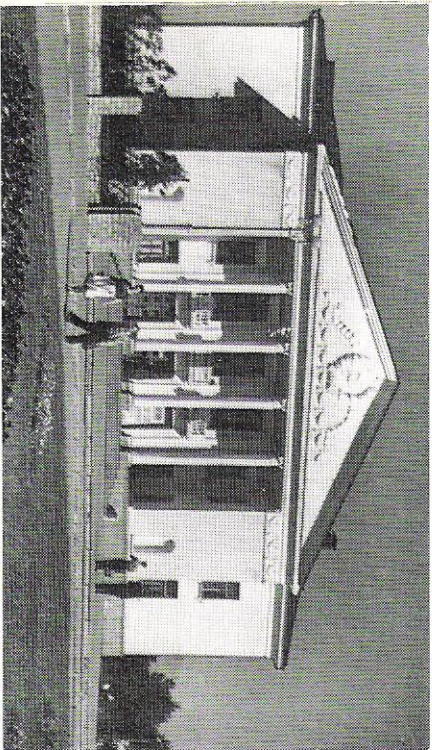
Housing projects are going ahead in town and country in Estonia. The houses above are the homes of shale miners in the new industrial settlement of Kõhla-Yave.

Below: New blocks of flats in Lenin Street, Tallinn.



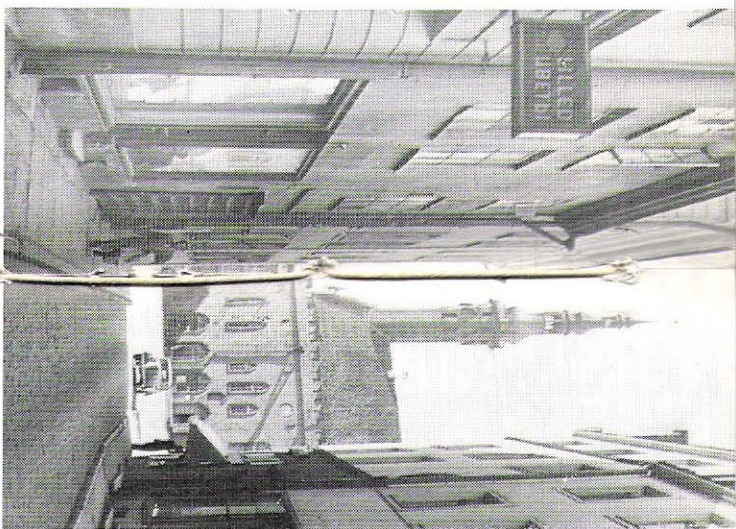
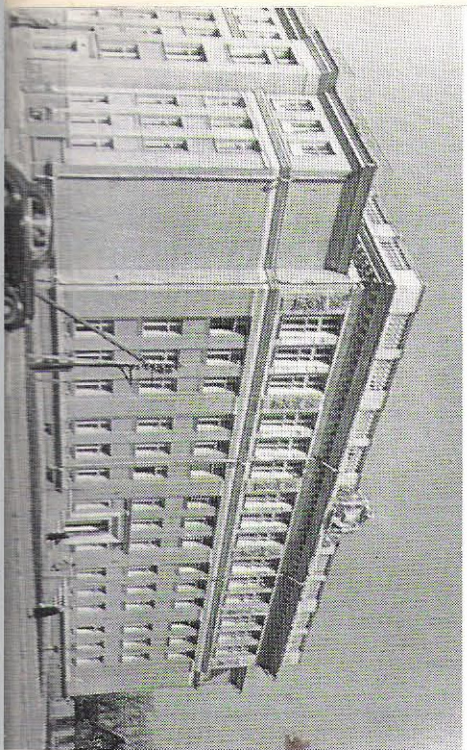


The State Theatre of Opera and Ballet, Tallinn.

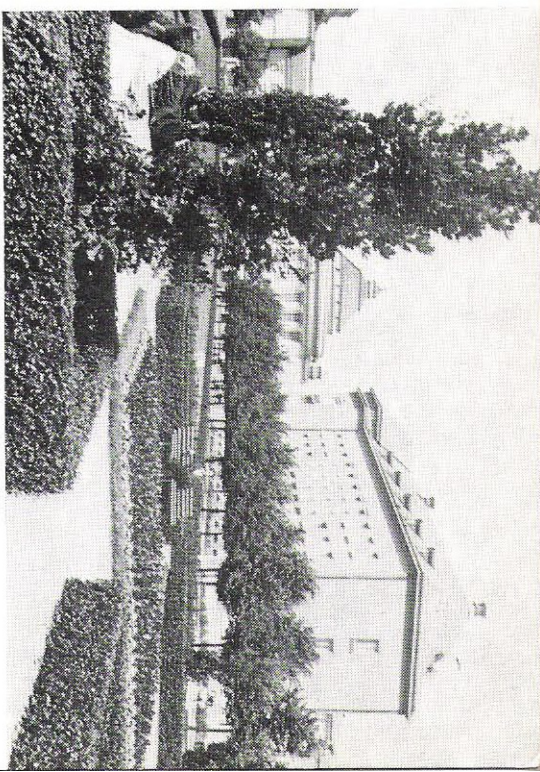
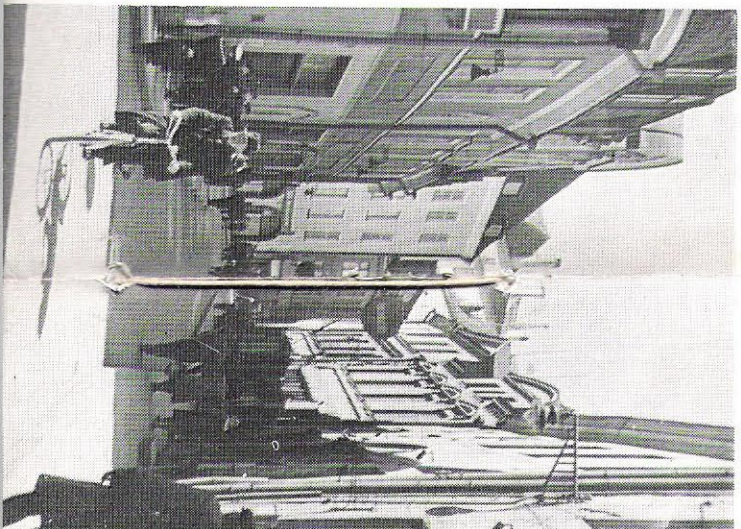


The House of Culture at Kohla-Yarve—the new town which has sprung up around the shale deposits.

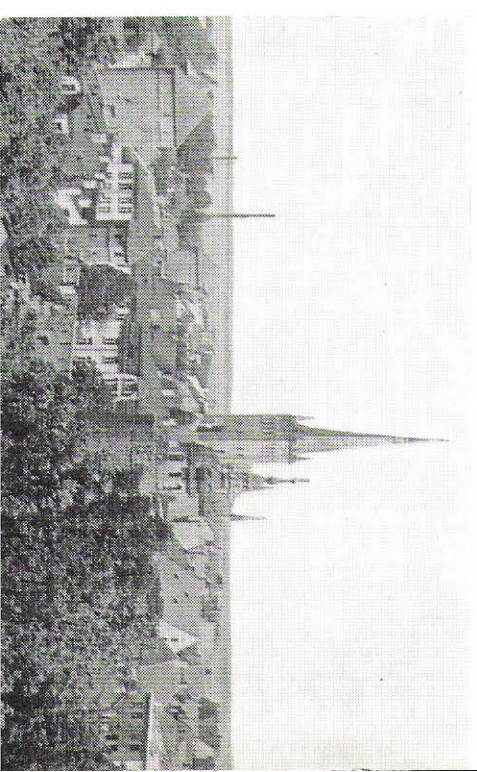
Below: A secondary school in Tallinn, Estonia.



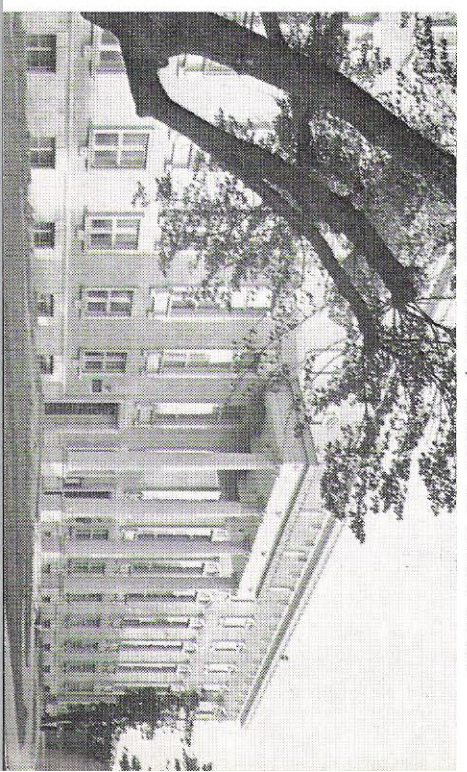
Tallinn has a history of nearly 750 years and has many old streets and buildings. Above: The Town Hall in the old district. Below: Olüvimagi Street.



New housing (on the right) on the Lenin Boulevard in Tallinn.



Estonia's capital, Tallinn, has an upper and a lower section. Most of the public buildings are in the upper or Vysigorod section shown above.

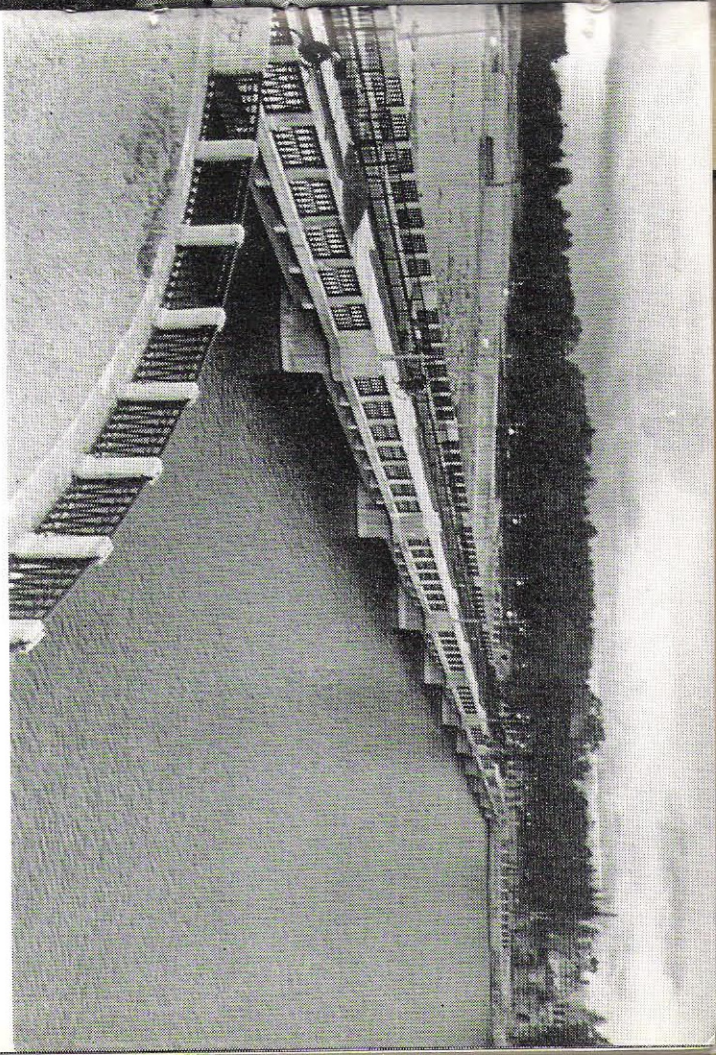


The Tallinn House of Culture on Sakala Street.

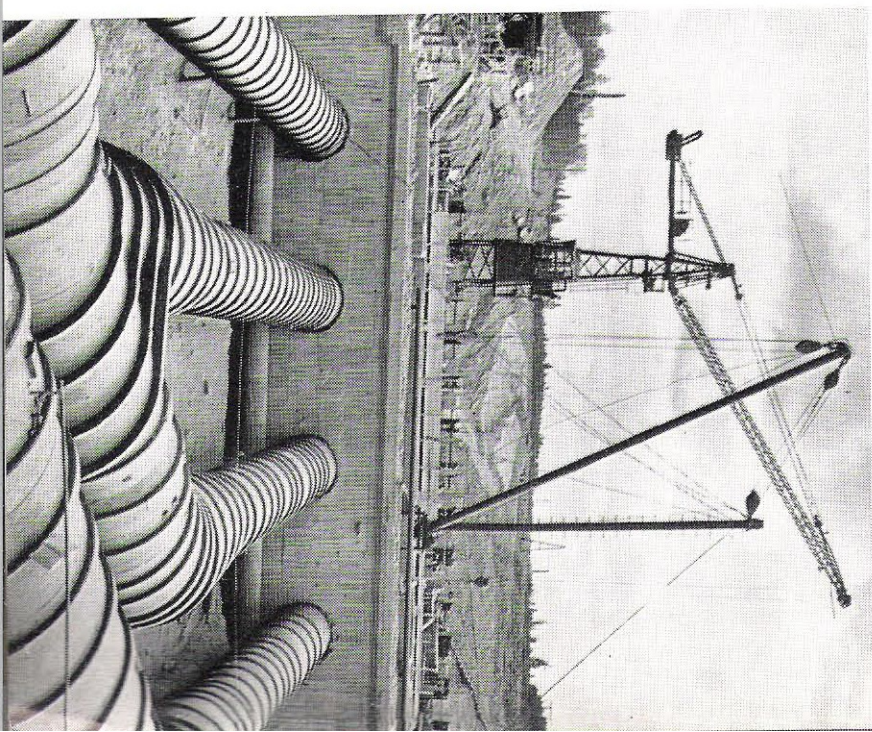


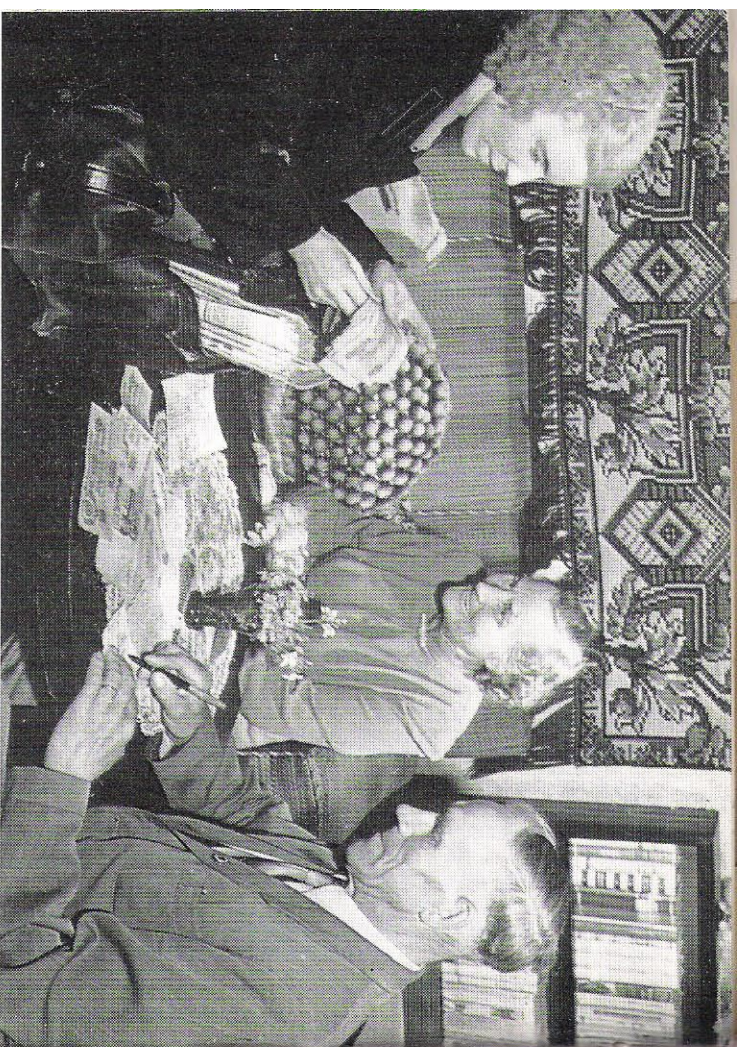
The thirst for education is as great in Estonia as elsewhere in the Soviet Union. The students above are residents in the Tallinn Polytechnic.

Cultural activity reaches a high level in Estonia. A particular pride is taken in its choirs, and below is shown the Estonian Academic Male Voice Choir conducted by Professor G. Ernesaks.



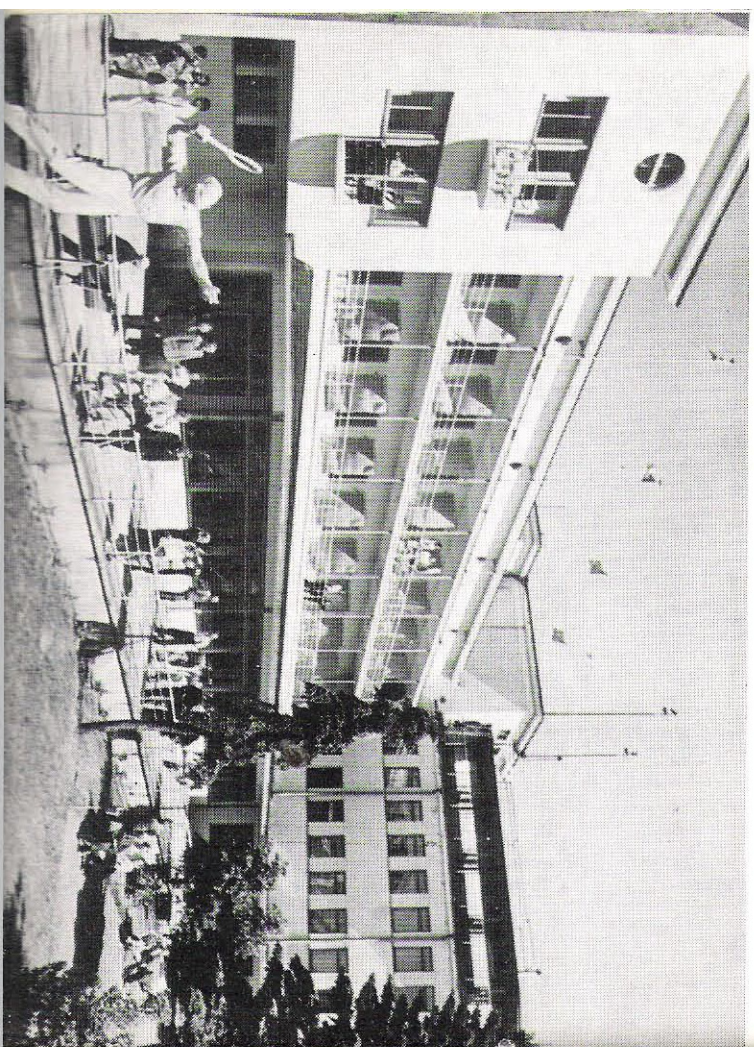
Power resources are increasing tremendously in Estonia. Above: The spillway of the Narva Hydro-electric Station. Below: A view of the construction site of the Baltic Thermal Electricity Station.





Old-age pensions are delivered to recipients in Estonia, and above we see Mr. and Mrs. Tamm of Tallinn signing the receipt.

Another aspect of Estonia's social services is the medical care. Below: is a scene at Sanatorium No. 1 in Pärnu.

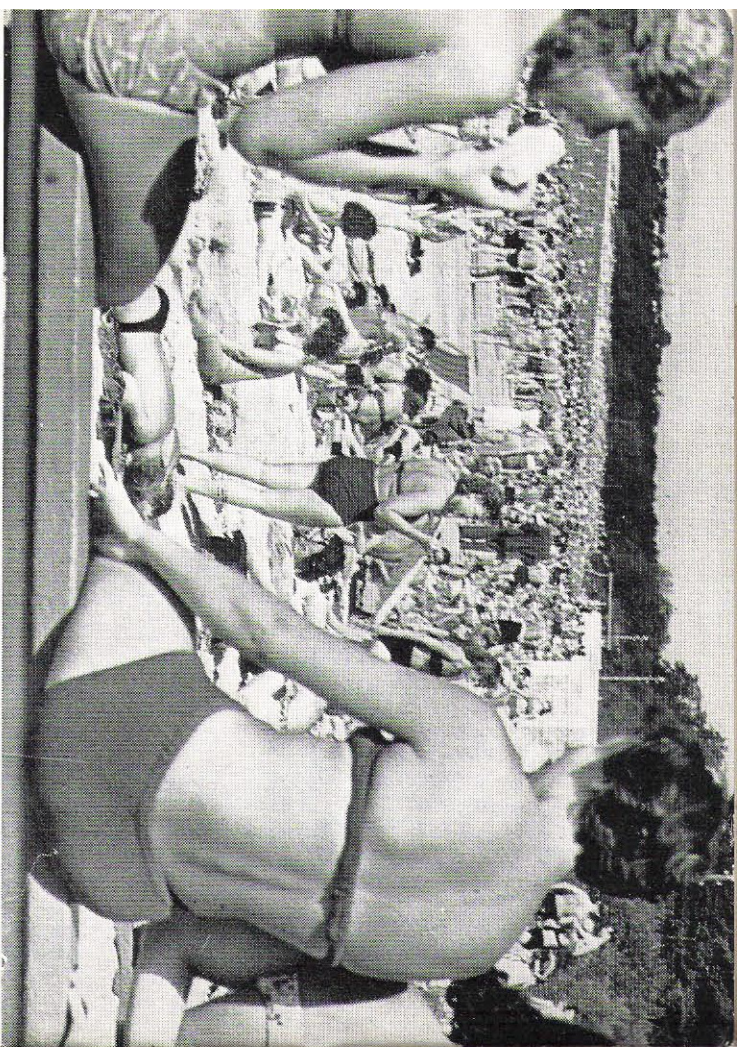


A Festival of Youth is held in Tallinn in June, and young people come from all over Estonia and its islands in their national or district costumes to participate.



One of the highlights of the gathering is a song and dance festival, and some of the performers are shown below in their colourful costumes.





There are some pleasant holiday places on the Estonian Baltic coast. The scene above is on the beach at Pirit.



The young people on the left are enjoying a hike in the Estonian countryside. They are workers at the Volta Electrical Factory in Tallinn.

One can form a notion of how much electricity there will be by the fact that in 1965 our per capita electricity output will reach 5,120 kwh. For the sake of comparison we might note that the per capita figure in the U.S.A. today is 4,100 kwh.

Machines and Instruments

Estonia does not have its own iron and steel industry. She gets steel and pig iron from the other Soviet Republics. For that reason the main line of developing Estonia's engineering industry will be that of making machines, instruments and automation devices that do not consume much metal and which only highly skilled workers, for whom Estonia has long been famed, can make.

New metal-working enterprises, some of which are already going up, will be built in Estonia in the seven-year period with the aim of keeping abreast with technical and scientific achievements and meeting the requirements of the Soviet Union's rapidly growing economy.

Production of mercury arc-rectifier units with power transformers for trunk-line electric locomotives is being started in Tallinn at a factory where formerly steam engines and freight cars were repaired.

Production of radio parts, important for new technical development, has been organised at the factory that once produced matches.

Factories making X-ray apparatuses and luminescent lamps will be put up in Estonia's second largest town, Tartu. A plant making impulse oscillographs will be built in the small town of Rakvere and a factory making small transformers in the town of Iykhi.

Many existing enterprises are being enlarged. A new big building will be put up for the Estikabel works. The "Estonia" radio set and instruments made at the Tallinn Punane RET factory are in demand far beyond the U.S.S.R.; and a new building is to be put up for it as well. As a result, output at both factories will double. Production of meters, applying radioactive isotopes, will be started at the Tallinn Meters and Gauges Factory.

The steady perfection of production on the basis of complex mechanisation and automation, application of the most advanced technology and organisation of production constitute the basis for the successful fulfilment of the Seven-Year Plan.

A campaign for technical progress has developed in all branches of the republic's economy at every enterprise. Workers and engineers, Communists and non-Party people are seeking out new ways to perfect production and increase labour productivity.

For example, the workers of the gas generator shop of the Kokkila-Yarve Plant have decided that within three years all the work in the shop beginning with the supply of shale and ending with the removal of ashes will be automated.

The campaign for technical perfection of production is enabling the workers of many enterprises of the republic to fulfil their seven-year plan targets ahead of schedule. For instance, workers of the Volta, Punane RET, Estikabel, Baltiskaya Manufaktura and many others have undertaken to complete their seven-year plan by 1964.

Efforts are now being made by the people of Estonia to ensure that the entire industry of the republic fulfils the Seven-Year Plan in six years!

The introduction of new machines will enable our enterprises to turn out absolutely new types of industrial commodities. Multi-purpose loaders, multi-scoop ditch excavators, new models of agricultural machines, machines for the mechanisation of extraction and concentration of shale—this is a far from complete enumeration of the future production of the heavy mechanical engineering plants of the republic.

Towards Abundance

There are to be considerable increases in the production of consumer goods and foodstuffs in Estonia in the seven-year period. The Communist Party and the Soviet Government have set as a main aim to have an abundance of goods so that Soviet citizens need not be in want for anything and all their requirements can be fully met.

Fabrics.—The main light industry in our republic is cotton textiles, an industry which employs one out of every ten factory workers in Estonia. We have already mentioned such huge enterprises as the Krenholm mills in Narva which were founded more than a century ago, and the Baltic mills in Tallinn. They were completely destroyed during the war, but now they are working to full capacity and in the coming seven years will greatly step up their output.

A comparison between the life of the textile workers at the Krenholm mills as it used to be and as it is today will not be devoid of interest. Listen to what Armin Korius, a veteran textile worker, has to say:

"I've been working here for nearly thirty years, ten of them when the bosses were in power. So I know how things have changed.

"In the old days we always thought we'd be thrown out of work any moment and were never sure of the morrow. Now things are completely different.

"Our old Krenholm mills have become young again. We have new equipment and modern textile machines, which make it much easier to work.

"The care and concern of the Communist Party are seen in everything. In the old days the Krenholm textile workers lived in barracks; today we have whole streets full of new houses with well-appointed flats. And see how many more are being built!"

In 1965 seven times more cotton fabrics will be put out in the republic than in 1940.

Output of woollen cloths will have increased from 3 million to 5,500,000 yards.

Footwear.—In the seven years the annual output of leather shoes will go up from 2,800,000 pairs to 4 million pairs. For this purpose existing factories will be enlarged and a leather factory will be built in Tartu.

Fish.—Estonia is hemmed in on three sides by the sea, and there are several hundred inland lakes. It is only natural therefore that fishing has always been a widespread vocation. Estonian cured and pickled sprats and lampreys enjoy a well-deserved reputation far outside the republic.

In old Estonia fish were caught in a very primitive fashion. The entire fishing fleet consisted of motor boats with low-powered engines, sailing boats and dinghies. And moreover there were twice as many dinghies as motor boats.

The annual catch ranged between 15,000 tons and 25,000 tons. The fish was processed on shore at a number of small semi-artisan establishments.

During the years of Soviet power the Party and the government have done much to develop this traditional industry. Coming together into co-operative fisheries, the fishermen, with the help of the state, have been given the opportunity of acquiring big vessels, kapron¹ nets and other tackle. There are no longer any dinghies or sailing boats.

The total capacity of the engines in Estonia's fishing fleet today is six times more than in 1939. Of late the annual catch has been more than 50,000 tons.

There are eighty-two fishing co-operatives in the republic at present.

Let us pay a visit to the fishing co-operative on the peninsula of Viimsi. Its income is growing from year to year—from 2,500,000 roubles in 1955 to more than 4 million roubles in 1958. This year it reckons that its income will amount to 6,500,000 roubles.

It has decided to buy a trawler to go out to the Atlantic herring grounds. There is considerable building going on at Viimsi. One club has already been built, the construction of another is nearing completion, and a Fisherman's House is planned.

The fishermen themselves are now well off: thirty-nine families are building new houses; all have radio sets, while fifteen families watch TV programmes from Tallinn on their own sets. Recently they have bought forty-six motor cycles and twelve passenger cars.

Under the Seven-Year Plan the catch is to be increased mainly by going out to deep-sea fishing grounds.

By 1965 the annual catch will reach 130,000 tons—as much as we caught in Estonia throughout the last seven years of capitalist rule ending in 1940.

The impressive sum of 780 million roubles has been earmarked to provide a big ocean-going fleet. Another 64 million roubles has been allocated to build a big fishing port in Tallinn. Besides that, big herring factories will go up in Tallinn and Pärnu.

Meat and Milk

For more than ten years now the peasants of Estonia have belonged to collective farms of which there are 752 in the republic today. They are all big, each owning an average of almost 6,000 acres.

Furthermore, there are also 134 state farms with an average of about 12,000 acres each.

At the beginning the collective farms made rather slow headway. But in recent years, thanks to the agricultural policy of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government, they have forged ahead.

Very great progress has been made in the last five years. Thus in comparison with 1953 the output of milk was a third more, of meat (including the natural increase in the herd) 59 per cent more, and of eggs a quarter more than in 1948.

The number of cows, pigs and sheep has also gone up. The income of the collective farmers has doubled and they are leading a prosperous life.

The life of Salme Lepa, an ordinary dairymaid of the Tuzua collective farm, in Mariamaa district, is a typical one. In old Estonia she worked as a farm-hand for a rich peasant. Nobody had ever heard of her and she led a drab, humdrum life.

At the collective farm she became famous. She obtained a yield of nearly

¹ Kapron is a Soviet artificial fibre like nylon.

5,000 kilograms² of milk from each cow and won the right to participate in the U.S.S.R. Agricultural Exhibition in Moscow where she was awarded a Gold Medal.

She has also been decorated with the Order of Lenin and the Badge of Honour for her good work. She has a fine house and owns a car.

Could she have dreamt of anything like that in old Estonia? Of course not! How will Estonia's agriculture develop in the next seven years?

It will continue to specialise in dairy and pedigree livestock farming and in the breeding of pigs for meat and bacon.

In 1965 the meat output is to be 60 per cent more than in 1958. We might note that the 1957 per capita output was already 63 kg. (139 lb.). In 1965 the per capita output is planned to be the same as it is now in the U.S.A.

But this is not the limit. Estonian farmers have decided to achieve the seven-year target in five years and more than double the meat output by 1965. Hence the per capita output per annum will be over 120 kg. (280 lb.) or much more than in the United States today.

As for the milk output, it will increase 80-90 per cent in the seven-year period. In 1957 Estonia's per capita milk output was 618 kg.—nearly twice as much as in the U.S. in that year (335 kg.).

By 1965 the per capita milk output in Estonia is to be 1,000-odd kilograms, or three times as much as the United States figure.

A big programme to boost agriculture is to be carried out in Estonia in the next seven years. The state has earmarked 1,133 million roubles for this purpose—to buy machinery, reclaim marshland by which much of the republic's territory is taken up, build new farm premises and electrify agriculture, especially milking.

The number of tractors will increase from 10,000 to 17,500 and of grain harvester combines from 1,400 to 1,900.

The collective farmers are themselves drawing up seven-year plans for their farms. August Pent, Chairman of the Edazi (Forward) collective farm, says:

"We are accustomed to work according to a plan. This helps us to utilise our resources and energies rationally and properly. We carried out our previous five-year plan.

"Things have greatly changed at our farm. In 1953 we had an income of just over 800,000 roubles; in 1958 it was close to 2 million.

"In the five years mentioned we built two big cattle yards, a pig sty and a poultry yard, all of which are fully mechanised. The cows are milked by electricity.

"We now have twenty-five electric motors altogether. We also have our own radio station, and nearly all the farm members have radio in their homes.

"Now we have drawn up a seven-year plan. All our farm members made suggestions for it and actually discussed each target. We want to forge ahead in the seven years and raise our living standards.

"We have decided to increase the dairy cattle herd to eight cows per 100 acres. We have outlined ways and means for sharply raising the milk yield and for obtaining 80 cwt. of meat per 100 acres.

"We shall be able to pay the collective farmers far more for their work.

² 1 kilogram=2.205 lb.

We intend to build a new cattle yard, a garage and a repair shop, as well as a club and several houses for the collective farmers."

Main Aim

The aim of the Seven-Year Plan is to raise steadily the people's living standards—in other words, to create every condition for the Estonian people to grow more prosperous with every passing year and to satisfy more fully their material and spiritual requirements.

Today the Estonian working people are far better off than they were under the capitalist rule. Let me give a few comparisons:

In 1938-39 the monthly wage of a skilled worker averaged 72 Estonian crowns, about 576 roubles, in terms of present prices. Today it averages 856 roubles, 48 per cent more.

Furthermore, one must add benefits and services which the worker did not have before: a Soviet citizen's income cannot be restricted merely to his earnings.

Thus the health service is free for all. All are entitled to paid holidays; anyone can be accommodated in a sanatorium or holiday home. Sick pay, paid maternity leave and other benefits are guaranteed. There are special benefits for people with large families.

Old-age pensions are as much as 50-100 per cent of one's earnings. In capitalist Estonia pensions totalled a sum equal to as little as 4 per cent of the total wages bill and, furthermore, factory workers received only 7 per cent of all the pensions, which went mainly to favoured civil servants. Today the pension sum is 12 per cent of the wages fund, and all factory and office workers are eligible for pension.

All the additional state-borne benefits mentioned above are equal to about a third of the wages fund. The net result is that today real wages and salaries in Estonia are twice as much as they were under capitalist rule even during boom, let alone crisis, years.

In the next seven years Soviet workers will get far more both in wages and especially in benefits. By 1965 the total wages fund will be nearly a third more than in 1958. The wages and salaries of lower- and middle-paid sections will be raised, as will minimum pensions.

By 1960 all the factory and office workers in Estonia—as throughout the Soviet Union in general—will have gone over to a six- or seven-hour working day. In 1962 factory and office workers, previously switched to a seven-hour day, will have gone over to a forty-hour working week, while beginning from 1964 the gradual transition to a 30-35-hour week will be started.

The reduced five-day working week will not mean any cut in wages.

Estonian shale miners already work a six-hour day. But their earnings are even more than when they had an eight-hour day.

At mine No. 4 in Sompia the average monthly earnings of a miner working underground have increased by 10-12 per cent and now reach 3,000 roubles, due to a higher level of mechanisation and better organisation of the work. The incomes of the collective farmers will also go up in the coming seven years. Total cash payments—apart from what the collective farmers receive in kind—will increase by roughly 60-65 per cent.

What Can a Worker Buy?

With every passing year workers in Soviet Estonia are able to buy more

and more with their wages. Consumption of foodstuffs and manufactured goods is steadily growing.

The factory worker is now better fed than in former days.

Whereas in 1937-38 a member of a working-class family consumed, on the average, 100 lb. of meat and meat products, in 1957 the average consumption had already reached 117 lb. The respective figures for milk are 359 lb. and 464 lb.; for butter, 13½ lb. and 20 lb.; other edible fats, under 3 lb. and nearly 9½ lb.; for sugar and sweets, 50 lb. and 76 lb.

The total number of calories consumed has increased by 18 per cent. The workers also buy far more manufactured goods than before. In 1936 *per capita* purchases of all kinds of fabrics (woolens, cotton textiles and linen) were 13 yards. In 1957 this was already 33 yards. More than twice as much footwear is now bought as formerly.

The Soviet citizen will be able to buy still more in the coming seven years because his income will go up substantially.

A Good Flat for Every Family

How do things stand as regards such an important matter as housing? In Estonia this problem was aggravated by the fact that more than a third of the urban housing was destroyed in the war.

After the war, especially in recent years, enormous sums have been invested in housing construction.

Between 1946 and 1958 state-run building organisations erected 1,700,000 square metres³ of residential floor space in the cities and towns of the republic. Furthermore, another 250,000 square metres were built by factory and office workers themselves with the help of state loans.

New towns have sprung up in the shale mining area—Kokhtla-Yarve, Iykhi, Akhtme and several big factory residential quarters.

However, there is still a shortage, both because of war-time damage and because of the rapid increase in the urban population, which today accounts for 56 per cent of the total population against 34 per cent in 1940.

The Communist Party pays great attention to housing. The Soviet Union's housing problem will be solved in the next ten to twelve years. A vast amount of housing is already going up in Estonia, and still more will be put up in the next seven years.

In Tallinn large-scale housing construction is to take place in the district of Mustamäe, a picturesque spot far away from factories and mills where there are plenty of parklands and the air is fresh and unpolluted.

The new housing estate here—some 525,000 square metres of floor space—will cover an area of 875 acres.

This will be a "satellite town," with its own theatre, accommodating 800 people, cinemas, a big department store, a market place with arcades, restaurants and cafes, various shops and stores, tailoring and dressmaking establishments, a stadium with grandstands seating 6,000, an indoor swimming pool and other sports facilities.

A motor road will link up Mustamäe with Kharku Lake (a little over a mile away), which will be turned into a tourist and holiday centre.

The new satellite town will have a population of 50,000 to 60,000.

³ 1 sq. metre = 10.76 sq. feet.

The people will live in four- to five-storey houses, with each family having a separate flat.

Another 740,000 square metres will be put up by private housebuilders with the help of state loans.

Altogether more than 2,300,000 square metres of urban housing will be erected, twice as much as in the previous seven years and equal to more than half of all the urban housing Estonia had by the beginning of 1959.

Many houses are also to be built in the countryside. In the next seven years 17,000 are to go up, against 1,500 in the past seven years.

Health Protection

In old Estonia it was difficult for workers to pay for the services of doctors of whom there were only 1,000 in the entire republic. For every day in hospital a skilled worker had to pay as much as two to four days' wages.

There were only 5,100 hospital beds. Health expenditure comprised only 1½ per cent of the budget.

With the establishment of Soviet power a free health service was introduced. The number of doctors in the republic has almost trebled, while the number of hospital beds has increased by 120 per cent. A tenth of the budget is now earmarked for health expenditure.

Thanks to the better health service and higher material standards death rates have sharply fallen. In 1954-58 the number of deaths to every 1,000 of the population was between eleven and twelve, against the 1940 figure of eighteen.

In the coming seven years Estonia's health service will be further improved. The number of beds in hospitals, maternity homes and clinics is to be increased considerably. New big hospitals, with the most up-to-date medical equipment, will go up in Tallinn, Tartu, Pärnu, Narva and Iykhi.

Estonia has many fine holiday resorts. Formerly the seaside resorts at Pärnu and Haapsalu were only within reach of the pockets of the rich. Today workers and collective farmers spend their holidays there. In the coming seven years more health and holiday homes will be built in Estonia. One big holiday home will be put up in the wonderful pine woods in Vyrn-Kubä and another will go up on the shore of the Gulf of Finland at the health resort of Narv-Jyvesu. Existing sanatoria will be enlarged.

Estonian workers also spend their holidays and take treatment at health resorts in the other Soviet Republics. Last year, for instance, the local trade union at the Tallinn Volta factory provided sanatorium and holiday-home accommodation free of charge, or at a 70 per cent discount, to 153 workers. They went to Sochi, Yalta, Kislovodsk or Yessentuki, or to holiday homes in beauty spots in their own republic.

Every year thousands of Estonian workers and collective farmers go off for a holiday to Latvia, Lithuania, the Crimea or the Black Sea. Some go hiking in the Caucasus or elsewhere in the Soviet Union, while others take a tour abroad.

With material standards constantly improving, more and more people will be able to spend their holidays in this fashion.

Sports are very popular in Estonia. Many Estonian sportsmen have gained Soviet and world fame. Among them are the renowned chess player

Paul Keres, ex-world wrestling champion Johannes Kotkas, the girl swimmer Ulvi Voog and the track and field athlete Hubert Pärnakiivi.

The government takes a great interest in sports, providing athletes with stadiums, tennis courts, the necessary training facilities, and so on. Much will be done in the coming period to further develop sports and physical training.

Schooling

The Seven-Year Plan holds out wonderful prospects for Estonia's cultural advancement too.

First, public education. In capitalist Estonia compulsory education for children of school age was, properly speaking, restricted to four grades. Only half the pupils were able to finish the sixth grade.

In Soviet Estonia compulsory seven-year schooling has become an established fact in both town and countryside. Anybody can receive a full secondary education. Instruction is given in the Estonian language.

Currently, the school is being reorganised to bring it closer to life. This reform will raise the standard of general education and polytechnical training and prepare the young people for useful labour in industry and agriculture, apart from providing higher educational establishments with a better-trained intake.

The reform will be inaugurated in the 1959-60 school year and completed in three to five years. Naturally, large funds will be required and many important things will have to be done.

In particular, ordinary and boarding schools to accommodate 50,000 pupils, twice as many as in the previous seven years, will be built. In addition, many collective farms will erect schools buildings at their own expense.

Higher Education

In Soviet Estonia higher education is open to everyone. Today three times the number of students attend the republic's universities and colleges as formerly.

Under Soviet power the network of colleges and institutes in Estonia has grown. The Estonian Agricultural Academy—founded in Soviet times—has a student body of 2,300; it trains agronomists, farm-machinery experts and other agricultural specialists.

The Tallinn Teachers' Training Institute has a student body of 1,600. Since the war the number of students at the Tallinn Polytechnic has increased more than five-fold. Its annual graduation is 360-380 engineers, compared with the 9-10 engineers graduated under the old regime.

At Estonia's oldest Tartu University many new buildings have been added and new faculties have been opened.

In the next seven years Estonia's colleges will train more than 15,000 specialists. This is apart from the specialists turned out by the thirty-five technical colleges (against the seventeen in old Estonia), which have six times as many students as previously.

Culture and Science

There were some places in our republic in the old days—the islands, for instance—where but fifteen years ago people had never seen a motion picture and did not know what radio was, where a book was a rarity and only the local government office received newspapers.

A mere fifteen years ago the Island of Ruknu, a splotch of land in the middle of the Gulf of Riga, seemed to be right outside the civilised world. There was no school; the local curate would gather the children together from time to time and teach them reading and writing. Libraries were unknown. Only the lucky few who visited the mainland now and again knew what a cinema was like.

Today the island has everything one would expect to find in a modern civilised place. Many of those who have completed their course at seven-year school now study at technical schools on the mainland.

There are two libraries—one especially for children—and they receive every new book which comes out. The local people are keen readers, and nearly everyone belongs to the library.

Pictures are shown regularly, twice a week, and are very popular. The local club sponsors various amateur art circles, and the drama group gives regular shows. Every now and again there is a concert by the local choir or folk dance ensemble.

The fishermen here are quite prosperous: they have radio sets and many have TV on which they watch programmes from Riga (it is nearer than Tallinn).

Everywhere on the island is supplied with electricity. Of course, not everywhere in Estonia was so backward as Ruknu. But signs of cultural development are to be seen everywhere.

Today 875 copies of newspapers and magazines are published to every 1,000 of the population in the republic. The average number of film attendances per head of the population is fifteen a year; the average number of library books borrowed, eight.

In Estonia today books are something everybody has. A short while ago I had a chat with Peeter Kurvet, accountant of a book store in the small town of Viiliandi. He told me that when he was a young man he'd dreamt of collecting a library of his own, but found he could not start even a small one.

The first volume of Anton Tammsaare's novel *Truth and Justice*, for instance, cost about five crowns, more than a worker could earn in two days. Today, he says, one can find books in every home. "In former times my shop sold only five or six books a day. But recently we sold out in one and a half days the 520 copies we had of the Selected Works of the Estonian author Oscar Luts.

"Before, our customers were mostly white-collar workers—teachers, doctors and lawyers. A peasant very rarely dropped in. Today, though, they simply clamour for books. In the village of Heimtale our agent Erno Päär sold 6,000 rubles' worth of books in one month."

The republic's network of cultural institutions will extend considerably in the coming seven years. The oldest Estonian "Vanemuine" theatre in Tartu will soon move into a new building. There will also be a bigger building for the Tallinn Conservatoire.

Big panoramic and wide-screen cinema houses will be put up in the Estonian capital; new cinemas, houses of culture, clubs and other institutions will go up everywhere in the republic.

The Estonians are genuinely proud of their music. Singers of the Tallinn "Estonia" Opera and Ballet House enjoy both Soviet and worldwide fame:

Tiit Kuusik recently toured in China, while George Ois gave performances in Finland.

Apart from classical pieces, the Opera House also stages such operas as *Flames of Revenge* and *Bard of Freedom* and ballets such as *Kalevipoeg* (Kalev's Son) and *Gold Spinners*, all by the eminent Estonian composer Eugene Kapp.

Gustav Erntaks, another celebrated Estonian composer, is the author of the popular operas *Stormy Shore* and *Baptism of Fire*.

Tallinn also has a drama theatre named after Victor Kingisep, the Estonian revolutionary; it has been granted the title of an Academic theatre for its achievements.

We have already mentioned the Tartu "Vainemune" theatre (named after the legendary god of song), which has dramatic, operatic and musical comedy companies. Apart from several other professional theatres elsewhere in the republic, there are also a number of amateur theatres.

Songs are very popular among Estonians. Every collective farm and village usually has its own choir. District Song Festivals take place every year and the Republic Song Gala once in five years. The next Song Gala, in July 1960, for which extensive preparations are now being made, will honour the twentieth anniversary of Soviet Estonia.

The Communist Party pays much attention to the development of science.

Estonia now has its own Academy of Sciences—founded in Soviet times—whose members elaborate problems of paramount importance for their republic's economic development, notably the chemical processing of shale and the mechanisation of its mining and concentration.

Everything is being done to promote science. Some 70 million roubles will be spent in the coming seven years to build and equip new institutes for the Academy; and a big astronomical observatory is to be erected in southern Estonia.

Tallinn has its own TV centre, whose programmes are watched even in southern Finland, and which regularly exchanges TV programmes with Leningrad. There are plans to build a new TV studio in Tallinn and TV re-transmission stations in other cities of the republic in the next seven years.

It is expected that eventually people will be able to watch TV programmes from Moscow, Riga, Vilnius and Minsk. Colour TV is to start in the republic towards 1965.

* * *

And so we see that in every field of economy and culture Soviet Estonia has a wonderful present and a still more beautiful future.

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